

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 8 1975  
DATE ENTERED AUG 22 1975

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
The Veranda House  
AND/OR COMMON  
The Curlee House

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
711 Jackson Street  
CITY, TOWN  
Corinth  
STATE  
Mississippi  
VICINITY OF  
First  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Alcorn  
COUNTY  
CODE  
28  
CODE  
003

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
City of Corinth

STREET & NUMBER  
Robinette Street

CITY, TOWN  
Corinth  
VICINITY OF  
Mississippi  
STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Office of Chancery Clerk

STREET & NUMBER  
Alcorn County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN  
Corinth  
STATE  
Mississippi

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Statewide Survey of Historic Sites

DATE  
1975  
--FEDERAL  STATE --COUNTY --LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History

CITY, TOWN  
Jackson  
STATE  
Mississippi

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the northwest corner of Jackson and Childs streets in Corinth, Mississippi, the Curlee House is a significant example of Greek Revival architecture modified and adapted to a domestic scale. Although the name of the architect has not survived, the excellent proportions and unified composition of the design clearly indicate that the house was the product of a single, well-trained man. Standing on a foundation of brick piers, the house is three bays wide, one story high, and surrounded on three sides by a narrow veranda. The exterior walls are finished with white stucco applied to lath on frame and scored to imitate ashlar masonry. Physical evidence indicates that the stucco was painted a straw color at an early date to cover what seems to have been a totally unconvincing example of marbleizing. The veranda, which is slightly let-out on each elevation to form small porticoes, is composed of slender chamfered columns on pedestals supporting a full entablature detailed with delicate water-leaf carvings below the frieze and simple starlike designs on the cornice. A narrow parapet wall is placed above the entablature to screen the structure's low-pitched roof. Large, full-length windows, placed symmetrically on each elevation, are hung in substantial eared architraves which are ornamented with applied rosettes and which support a shallow cornice. Each window opening retains its original set of louvered blinds. Recessed behind an opening which repeats the exact details and dimensions of the windows, is the entrance to the Curlee House. It is contained in a substantial frontispiece designed with pilasters that separate the door from narrow, flanking sidelights, and is capped by a large, seven-light transom. Alterations to the exterior of the house have been limited to the replacement of two pairs of octagonal chimneys with lower, more conventional stacks, the removal of simple, sawn antefixes from the parapet wall, and the construction of a frame addition to the rear elevation in the early 1930s.

The plan of the Curlee House is based on the traditional double-pile formula, with a broad central passage separating the drawing and dining rooms on the south side from two chambers currently furnished as a library and bedroom on the north. Two simple plaster chandelier medallions and a chair rail with panel-like moldings applied to the dado below are used to emphasize the entrance hall. As the "best room," the drawing room received special treatment by being housed in a sixteen-foot-nine-inch cube and by the use of giant pilasters, with egg and dart molding on the capitals, to frame the door, mantel, and windows. The pilasters visually support an ambitious entablature with an architrave carved with a delicate water-leaf design, a frieze ornamented with an elaborate guilloche, and a cornice of deeply undercut acanthus leaves which twist around a center rod. Because of the attention given to the room's proportion and architectural program, the drawing room at the Curlee House is considered to be among the finest of the period in Mississippi. Other major interior features include wooden mantels designed with simple paneled pilasters supporting uncarved friezes and shelves; deep, well-proportioned cornices with rosettes applied to the friezes which run beneath; and the battered and eared architraves surrounding six paneled doors.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Association with locally prominent families
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES                      1857                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Curlee House is a significant example of domestic Greek Revival architecture and, because of its association with locally prominent families and several important Civil War figures, is among the most historic structures in Alcorn County. Construction of the house was begun in about 1857 by a surveyor named Hamilton Mask. With his brother-in-law, Houston Mitchell, Mask had established the town of Corinth in 1855, a few miles below the Tennessee state line at the junction of the Mobile and Ohio and the Memphis and Charleston railroads. Mask, who later served two terms (1866, 1872) as mayor of Corinth, sold the property to Burnett B. Wilkerson for \$7,000 in 1860. Later that same year the title passed to William Simonton, who retained ownership for the next twelve years.

During the Civil War, Simonton's residence served as headquarters for both Confederate and Federal generals during their occupations of Corinth. With its defeat at the Battle of Shiloh (April 6, 1862), the Confederate army under P. G. T. Beauregard retreated twenty miles south to Corinth, where General Braxton Bragg took up residence in Simonton's house. General Earl Van Dorn, whose army had come from Arkansas to join Beauregard at Corinth, later occupied the house with Bragg. The Federal army of General Henry W. Halleck pursued the retreating Confederates so slowly that by the time it had reached Corinth on May 30, 1862, Generals Beauregard, Bragg, and Van Dorn had quietly withdrawn farther south with their men. Thus, the Federal army occupied Corinth without a fight and Simonton's residence once again served as a commander's headquarters, this time for General Halleck. The 15,000-man Union army continued to camp at Corinth until October 3, 1862, when the city was attacked by Confederate Generals Van Dorn and Sterling Price. Although unsuccessful in their attempts to secure Corinth for themselves, the Confederates forced the Federals to pursue their retreat, thus leaving the city unoccupied. By October 5, 1862, Simonton's house was returned to civilian use.

Reflecting the deteriorated economic condition brought about by civil war and reconstruction, the property was sold for \$4,000 in 1872. Three years later, the house and lot were purchased for \$2,000 by William P. Curlee (1833-1878), a locally prominent lawyer and jurist. A native of Tipton County, Tennessee, Curlee graduated in 1856 from Union University at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and took his law degree at Lebanon Law School in 1858. After serving in various regiments of the Confederate army, Curlee settled in Tishomingo County, Mississippi, where on October 20, 1865, he was elected judge of the probate court. When Alcorn County was carved out of Tishomingo in 1870, Curlee moved permanently to the new county seat at Corinth, where he practiced law until his death in 1878. In 1882, Curlee's widow, Mary Boone Curlee, sold the property.

After a succession of owners and subdivisions, the house was purchased in 1921 by Shelby Hammond Curlee, who by 1938 had succeeded in acquiring all the original family property. S. H. Curlee had established a woolen mill in Corinth in 1896 which, when



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moved to St. Louis in 1905, became the famous Curlee Clothing Company. His sister, Eleanor Katherine Curlee, occupied the house from 1925 until her death in 1944. It was during her residence that the house was modernized with a rear addition containing a kitchen, bedroom, and bath and with a brick wall built to replace a simple picket fence surrounding the property. The property is now maintained by the Corinth Library Commission, which was deeded the house by S. H. Curlee IV in a series of gifts from 1960 to 1963. Today the house is operated as a museum and open regularly to the public.

Despite additions made to the structure, the Curlee House is significant for the quality and integrity of its architectural fabric. The design is notable for the skillful handling of abstract proportion, the knowledgeable and restrained reference to Greek Revival motifs, and the clear, uncluttered delineation of individual parts. Because there exists a detailed pen and ink drawing and an excellent photograph of the house, both made during the Civil War, it is not difficult to assess or appreciate the significant degree of preservation which the Curlee House enjoys. With a few minor exceptions, the house stands today just as it did when completed in 1857.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

Corinth (Miss.) Herald, "Historical Edition," December 15, 1903.

Jackson. Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Statewide Survey File. Alcorn County. Curlee House.

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Mississippi. Secretary of State. Register of Commissions, 1865-1869, 1871-1874. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Record Group 28, vols. 4, 5.